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A two-semester internship program using prospective secondary English teachers as assistants in the teaching of college freshman English classes was instituted at Aurora College, Illinois. The program tested the assumption that prospective teachers with internship experience would perform better during their student-teaching semester than those without it. In their junior year, the interns assisted in the second semester of Freshman English (introduction to literature and the term paper); in their senior year they assisted in the composition classes of first-semester freshmen. The internship involved an introduction to planning units and lessons, to practical aspects of instruction, and to evaluation techniques under the personal guidance of an experienced teacher. Scores on the National Teacher Examination in English Language and Literature given at the end of the internship showed gains over scores made on the same test given at the beginning of the experiment. Overall, the study did not lend itself to statistical analysis. Instead, anecdotal records by the interns themselves, their "master" teachers, their public school teachers, and their college supervisor in the student-teaching semester gave evidence of gains in motivation, poise, flexibility, open-mindedness, and teaching insight. (Author/LH)

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INTERIM REPORT

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ILLINOIS STATE-WIDE CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER IN THE PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS (ISCPET)

A Study of the Effect Upon Student Teachers of a Two-Semester Internship in College Freshman English Classes

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Aurora, Illinois

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Summary

A non-statistical study of the effect upon student teachers of a two-semester internship in college freshman English classes revealed a growth in poise, flexibility and open-mindedness in particular classroom situations and a growing awareness of the demands of teaching upon energy and time in planning and preparation and in evaluating the results of teaching and the success of various methods. The interns gained insight into the demanding task of teaching English as well as some knowledge about and some practical experience in actual teaching situations.

Introduction

In exploring the improvement of the preparation of secondary school English teachers, the focus of ISCPET, one area which could be investigated with a small number of cases seemed to be the area of enlarging the potential teacher's practical classroom experience by beginning it earlier under the guidance of an experienced and enthusiastic college English teacher who would share generously his teaching insights as well as his teaching skills. Aurora College chose such a study.

The study reported here dealt with a special two-semester internship program involving prospective secondary English teachers as assistants in the teaching of college freshman English classes. The assumption was tested that prospective English teachers with this type of internship experience would perform better during their student teaching semester than if they had not had the internship experience.

Methods

The sequence of courses for the interns in the study was: first semester of junior year, The Teaching of English; second semester of junior year, Internship in the second semester of Freshman English (introduction to literature and the term paper); first semester of senior year, Internship in the first semester of Freshman English (composition); second semester of senior year, Student Teaching.

During the interval of the study, there were three groups of interns, a total of nine. One additional intern served only one semester and then withdrew. Four different college instructors were master teachers.

Interns were selected by the ISCPET Ad Hoc Committee of Aurora College, after a review of the educational records of the group of students approved for student teaching by the institution-wide Teacher Education Committee. So far as practical considerations such as schedules permitted, an intern was assigned to a different

teacher each of the two semesters. The intern received two hours credit each semester. The only financial benefit was that his tuition was provided by the special study grant.

The intern shared with the teacher in the planning of units of the course and in the planning for particular lessons. Through practical experience the intern learned about such tasks as conducting class discussions, annotating compositions with discriminating and helpful comments, holding student conferences, writing valid tests.

Usually once or twice a year, the interns went with a master teacher to visit the English classes in some high school within a fifty-mile range. They observed methods of teaching for the slow, the average and the gifted.

Each year when some distinguished specialist in English Education came to consult with the ISCPET Ad Hoc Committee, he also met with the interns and student teachers to discuss their questions with them.

During the student teaching semester, some of the seminar sessions for the student teachers who had been interns were conducted at the request of the Education Department by one of the master teachers from the English Department.

When the interns entered their student teaching semester, several of the Ad Hoc Committee met with the several public school teachers under whom the interns were to work to explain to them the internship study. When the consultant was on campus these public school teachers were invited to the dinner and address at which the interns, the college Education and English teachers and college administrators were present also. At the invitation of the Education professor in charge of secondary school student teachers, one of the master teachers also visited the student teachers.

Result and Findings

A study of this type and with so few cases is not suited to precise measurement or statistical analysis.

However, some relatively simple and unsophisticated types of evaluation may have given some worthwhile evidence indicative of the value of the internship experience. Materials such as the following were compiled and reviewed: anecdotal records and evaluating notes made by the experienced college teacher who worked with the intern; the intern's own evaluation of his growth each semester of the internship in understanding of the teaching process; the judgment of the public school teachers who worked with the interns during the student-teaching semester; and the observations by the

college professor from the Department of Education who supervised the student teaching program.

Insofar as the judgments from these different sources seem to agree with reference to the progress of a particular student or insofar as a majority of the memoranda from one particular group of people agree with reference to some prevailing characteristics of the internship, it would seem to indicate the validity of the judgment. A report of these findings follows.

Analysis of the case studies and anecdotal records reveals that there are two areas of agreement among interns, master teachers, high school critic teachers and the college supervisor of student teaching. There are also supplementary observations which parallel in effect these areas of agreement.

One area of agreement or consensus is that characteristics such as poise, flexibility and open-mindedness often develop during the internship. "I was much pleased with her handling of the class, her originality in planning projects, and her rapport with students," wrote one master teacher, and an intern wrote, "It was thrilling to be respected and accepted as a teacher by the students." After student teaching in the public schools the intern wrote: "The initial quivers about standing in front of a class did not affect me as a student teacher." And about another intern the master teacher commented: "She seemed to gain self-confidence before the class, insight into students' lacks and needs in a freshman English course, and perhaps a better idea as to how to meet classroom problems. I could see her poise and rapport with the class increase as she gained experience in handling the discussions, explanations and student questions."

The characteristics of flexibility and open-mindedness appear: "She understood their work and discussion in the light of individual differences," wrote another master teacher. An intern "proved most adept at interesting the class and planning special projects to suit their needs." Another intern "measured student progress with a complex sensitivity to their needs," according to the master teacher. "Having taught as an intern," wrote one young lady, "helped in preparing me for and understanding possible student reactions to a given lesson." And another intern evaluated her adjustment as follows: "The fusion of ideal objectives with <u>possible</u> objectives, the realities of time limitations for both teacher and students, the intuition which seems to be part of the experienced teacher were generously and gently shared in dozens of brief chats. Out of these, I think, came real clarification of ideas, yet without disillusionment."

A consensus also exists that skills and characteristics such as budgeting time for preparation, lesson planning, mastery of the subject, and effective paper-grading may develop during the internship.

There were many comments upon budgeting time and lesson planning. "In a real situation, while coping with the real limitations of time and human endurance, I became involved in all activities relating to the execution of English 102," declared one intern, and another pointed out after one semester of internship: "Now I know how much work is involved in complete preparation for a single class hour and how long it takes to grade one set of papers." Sometimes the awareness of this characteristic came afresh to the master teachers as an intern's comments shows: "The evaluations of themes or essay test questions were tasks which took many more hours for an inexperienced intern than an experienced teacher could imagine. In discussions with other interns, I found this to be a problem all shared." One master teacher, concentrating on the skill of paper grading, evaluated an intern by writing, "She was at her best in grading papers, because her comments came to be helpful rather than simply admonitory." And about the mastery of their subject (the highest consensus among the high school critic teachers was in this area) one college master teacher wrote: "She did a particularly good job toward the end of the semester in presenting a Shaw comedy and pointing out some of its subtleties and techniques. I'm sure that the class got more out of reading the play after her presentation. Several students said so voluntarily."

In addition to the above areas of agreement, some parallel findings appeared. Exchanges among the interns themselves indicated a developing interest in teaching and a growing professional concern. One master teacher took note: "The interns got together several times to discuss their work. Probably doing this was beneficial for all of them, since they discussed the various techniques used in the different classes and they had a better idea of the problems that can come up in a freshman English class." Two interns who subsequently decided not to pursue a teaching career gave evidence of findings which, in a certain way, related to the findings about the other interns: a master teacher described one such person as "more self-aware than sensitive to student feelings" and this view found support in the evaluations of the critic teacher and the college supervisor, both of whom marked her as minimal in flexibility. Those interns who sought other careers agreed with all others about time and preparation: "I spent, on one occasion, eleven hours preparing for one lecture, getting it organized, polished, etc. for presentation. This time spent gave me a presentable lecture, but also gave me a sense of appreciation for a really excellent lecture . . . I have learned that really good teaching is a really exhausting job, and at times I have had serious doubts that I can do a commendable job." A master teacher wrote: "In a conversation we had after he had completed his work at the college, he remarked that he would not teach in high school because it would be too much work." Finally, another supplementary observation went beyond the immediate associations of interns, master teachers, high school critic teachers and the college supervisor. One intern decided that "The internship program

has made me more acutely aware of teaching methods used in my other classes. I find that I evaluate my teachers' techniques to determine their greatest strengths and weaknesses."

Both a majority of the high school critic teachers and the college supervisor in various ways pointed out that the interns had a noticeable confidence.

On May 9, 1969, at the ISCPET meeting in Chicago, three of the former interns and one of the 1969 student teachers who had been an intern reported the values of the internship as they looked back upon it from some experience in teaching and student teaching. On May 12, 1969, these reports were again presented in the faculty meeting of Aurora College.

In these reports the emphases already noted above appeared again and the individuals reporting gave evidence that the ideas they presented had genuine meaning for them. These reports gave further confirmation to the observation notes already gathered from the various sources.

In summary, the findings emphasize these points. The interns declared a motivation toward excellence as teachers and felt that they had gained insight about the limitations of time in planning and teaching, and an increased poise. The master teachers noted flexibility, open-mindedness and poise. Although the high school critic teachers did not report finding an exceptional familiarity with the high school course of study on the part of the interns, they did note in various ways the confidence in approaching a class and in instructional procedures. The college supervisor noted the confidence gained from the experience. The college supervisor wrote:

> All that precedes student teaching is preparation for the student to demonstrate during that experience that he can teach.
>
> One significant difference was noted between student experiences before student teaching in the internship program and the standard program. The latter has provisions for knowledge only, while the former makes provisions for both knowledge and experience. Experience through the planned programs such as the course in the Teaching of English and the internship are commendable, because they permit minimal error and provide opportunity for the student to learn positive social attitudes from those errors which he does make. The end result of such a program, because of the three semesters of experience in essential elements of teaching, is that the student comes to student teaching better prepared than does the student in the standard program.

> In nearly all instances when the student teaching performance of the student who had had the benefit of the internship was compared through observation with the student who had experienced the standard program only, the former excelled. In those instances where the performances appeared to be equal, it seemed evident that the student who had come through the standard program had the advantage of maturity. Nevertheless, the student with the internship experience performed from the beginning of the student teaching period with greater confidence and self assurance.

Also, a battery of several evaluation instruments was administered to each intern just after he began his first semester of internship and again one year later as he began his student teaching semester just after the conclusion of his second semester of internship. The instruments used were: The National Teacher Examination in English Language and Literature, The Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule.

On the National Teacher Examination in English Language and Literature, all interns showed a distinct gain over the year. Likewise, on the attitude measures, all interns showed changes in attitudes during the same period of time. There are known limitations to these inventories so that predicting the future success of a teacher-candidate from these inventories remains a somewhat uncertain effort.

Conclusions

Both the ISCPET Ad Hoc Committee and the college administration believe that the various kinds of evidence gathered about the internship experience strongly indicate that most of the individuals who have participated have profited in the direction of becoming good teachers. The interns have expressed an awareness of increased insight and a challenging motivation to excellence in teaching. Perhaps even the one who withdrew at the end of one semester of internship and the one who at the end of the student teaching semester decided against teaching profited since the difficulty of their adjustment to the task appeared before beginning a teaching appointment.

Further, the administrative officers of Aurora College are persuaded of the value of the basic idea of the internship and have authorized its continuance, modified as may be necessary by the limitations of the college budget. The history department has evinced exploratory interest in some form of internship. In the May 12, 1969, faculty meeting the president not only commended the ISCPET Special Study but urged that other departments seek for comparable ways of helping to prepare secondary teachers well since a considerable proportion of Aurora College graduates choose teaching as a vocation. It is expected, therefore, that the years ahead will write some chapters supplementing this present report.

APPENDIX A

INTERNS	THEIR ACTIVITIES SINCE GRADUATION
1966-1967	
Gloria Baumann	One year at graduate school, M.A.T.,1968 Began teaching English in college, fall, 1968.
Ruth Hunt	Decided not to go into teaching. Working in an office.
Wilma Reuland	Two years at graduate school with part-time assistantship. M.A., 1969. Under appointment to teach English at college level, fall, 1969.
Don Dascenzo	Withdrew from teaching program after one semester of internship.
1967-1968	
Ruth Badal	Began teaching English in junior high school, fall, 1968.
Gilbert High	As soon as he completes a course to be offered fall, 1969, will be available to teach.
Helen Lockward	Began teaching English in senior high school, fall, 1968.
1968-1969	
Charles Cadieux	Under appointment to teach English in high school, fall, 1969.
Lloyd Lauger	Under appointment to teach English in high school, fall, 1969.
Jane Rebmann	Expects to begin teaching English in fall, 1969.

APPENDIX B

Master Teachers from the English Department

Ruth B. Clark

Donald A. Fuller

Theodora E. Sinden

Marian Winteringham

College Supervisor of Secondary School Student Teachers from the Education Department

Roy L. Crews

APPENDIX C

INTERNS' SCORES ON NATIONAL TEACHER EXAMINATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

This examination was first administered at the beginning of the first semester of internship. It was administered again just after the close of the second semester of internship.

Student	First Administration	Second Administration	Gain in Points
A	650	680	30
B	640	730	90
C	570	690	120
D	590	620	30
E	550	640	90
F	670	730	60
G	570	620	50
H	650	720	70
I	690	740	50